

AGENDA ITEM: Regional Library Network Development

ISSUES TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD AT THIS MEETING:

1. Review of the status of planning activity within the Planning Regions.
2. Consideration of reducing the number of regions from eight to seven based on recommendations from the Planning Regions.
3. Consideration of increased funding from Library of California funds for development of regional programs and services and supporting statewide infrastructure, and completion of regional planning.

RECOMMENDED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD: I

move that the Library of California Board acknowledges the recommendation submitted by Region 2 and Region 8 that they become a single region for planning purposes, I recommend that there now be 7 instead of 8 Library of California Regional Planning Groups.

RECOMMENDED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD: I

move that the Library of California Board authorize the expenditure of not more than \$276,824 to support the completion of regional planning activity leading to the establishment of regional library networks and that this expenditure does not constitute Board policy for long term distribution of funds, and I move that the Board direct its Chief Executive Officer to negotiate with applicants to ensure that planning activity meets the stated criteria, hereby adopted by the Board as they appear in Document 16, and to ensure that these funds are expended during the current fiscal year.

RECOMMENDED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD: I

move that the Library of California Board authorize the expenditure of not more than \$4,085,780 to support project grants for regional services and projects leading to the establishment of regional library networks and their service programs, and that this expenditure does not constitute Board policy for long term distribution of funds, and I move that the Board direct its Chief Executive Officer to negotiate with applicants to ensure that projects meet the stated criteria, hereby adopted by the Board as they appear in Document 16, and to ensure that these funds are expended during the current fiscal year.

CURRENT STATUS:

ISSUE 1: Regional Planning Update.

At its November meeting, the Board requested an update on regional planning to be presented at its February meeting. Staff requested all Regional Planning Groups to submit updates on planning efforts to date as well as completing their quarterly reports. All Regional Planning Groups have submitted their first and second quarterly reports as well as planning updates. All are moving ahead towards applying for Regional Library Network status, with all regions anticipating applications coming to the Board during this calendar year. Exhibits A and B were prepared by Christopher Berger from information submitted. Exhibit A summarizes the Accomplishments, Challenges, and Additional Help Desired as submitted by Regional Planning Groups, as well as the expected completion date for regional planning for each region. Exhibit B contains regional responses to the planning update questionnaire. Region 8 is combined with Region 2 in their response.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Initial planning grants did not cover all costs for regional library network development. Either the grant underestimated the amount of time planning would take to complete, and therefore, the costs of planning, or there were costs that were not projected, such as the need for legal and professional services or consultant services to assist in development of regional documents. Most regions have attempted to work within the resources available to them and to only request additional funding due to new costs or an increased timeline for planning completion.
2. Regional Planning Groups have learned the needs of libraries in their area through a combination of formal needs assessment and informal interaction. Project grants submitted are based on meeting the needs of diverse sets of libraries as well as increasing the ability of libraries and librarians to serve their patrons with new and diverse tools.
3. Hiring of consultants to assist in the planning process has been beneficial to those groups who have done so. They have provided the leadership and staff support to assist regional volunteers to better structure their time and efforts.
4. Staff efforts to centralize development of model documents for the creation of Regional Library Networks is appreciated and encouraged. The draft bylaws are nearing completion, and staff are working on model application documents and other planning documents requested by the field.

5. Publicity needs to be expanded so that regional and statewide efforts are publicized. Timely communication with the Regional Planning Groups is essential to regional planning progress.
6. Staff liaisons to the field work well, and Regional Planning Groups benefit from having staff present at planning meetings. Staff are also appreciated for their presence at regional meetings to explain and publicize the Library of California and its services.

ISSUE 2: Request For Change In The Number Of Planning Regions.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:

During the planning process for the Library of California, participants identified five geographic regions into which California should be divided to accomplish regional planning goals. The Library of California Board is responsible for oversight of regional planning efforts, and it is the Board's responsibility to determine the optimal number of regions to accomplish this task.

At its February 1999 meeting, the Board considered requests from regional planning groups to revise the configuration of the existing five groups statewide, and consider the possibility of increasing the number of groups to eight. Two regions requesting division into smaller areas were the Greater Bay Area Region (Region 2) and the Southern California and Central Coast Region (Region 4). The third area requesting changes was the Greater San Joaquin Valley north to the Oregon border, which requested reconfiguration into three smaller regions. The Board acted at that meeting to expand the number of groups to eight and have the map of the planning regions revised to show this new configuration. The Bay Area Region divided into Region 8 for the North Bay Area, and Region 2 for the Peninsula, East Bay and Monterey Bay areas. The Southern California Region divided into Region 4 for Los Angeles and Orange counties, and Region 7 for Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties. The most northerly region became Region 1, which has the same geographic boundaries as the current CLSA North State System. Region 3 now includes MVLS and 49-99 CLSA system areas, and Region 6 is the southern San Joaquin covering the SJVLS system area.

Over the past year, the Planning Group in Region 8 has been reconsidering its ability to plan on its own, and whether or not it would be of greater benefit to reunite with Region 2 for planning purposes. At its October 1999 meeting, the Region 8 Planning Group voted to reunite with Region 2. The convener of the Planning Group, Debbie Mazzolini from the Belvedere-Tiburon Library, sent a letter to all prospective Region 8 libraries informing them of the decision of the Planning Group, and asking for their questions and feedback about this decision. At the January 6, 2000 planning meeting, the Region 8 Planning Group agreed that there was little feedback from libraries and that the

recommendation to return to planning with Region 2 would be forwarded to the Library of California Board for their consideration and action. Debbie Mazzolini sent a letter to Jim Dawe informing him of Region 8's action and requesting action by the Board to approve Region 8 reincorporating into Region 2 (see Exhibit C). At the same time, representatives from diverse libraries in Region 8 agreed to participate in the Region 2 Planning Group.

At the January 21, 2000 meeting of the Region 2 Planning Group, the group considered Region 8's request to rejoin them for planning purposes, and agreed that this action should be taken. As a result, Linda Crowe sent a letter to Jim Dawe formally requesting that the Board recognize the desire of Region 2 and Region 8 to plan together, and that both groups now be designated as Region 2 for planning purposes (see Exhibit D).

Staff Recommendation:

Revise the number of Planning Regions from eight to seven and redraw the map of Planning Regions to show the revision (see Exhibit E).

ISSUE 3: Requests For Supplemental Funding For Planning And Projects.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:

During 1998/99 and 1999/2000, the Library of California Board received funding each year to support initial implementation for the development of the Library of California. Following an application process during May 1999, Network Planning Groups were awarded \$550,000 in planning grants to support regional library network development.

On October 26, 1999, representatives of the Regional Planning Groups met in Sacramento. They were advised at that time that additional funds were available from the Library of California to support local efforts to develop and strengthen regional networks. These representatives were encouraged to work with their Regional Planning Groups and their State Library Regional Liaisons to develop ideas for using additional funds, if needed, to support and enhance network development and membership. Programs or projects that encouraged wider participation by libraries of all types were to be considered as well as projects that would help the network to develop cohesive service packages. In addition, regional planning groups that needed additional planning funds to continue and complete their planning processes were encouraged to develop a budget for planning fund augmentation. Regional contacts were advised that all requests for supplemental funding must fall within the funded areas of the Act, and that projects not doing so could not be considered for funding at this time.

On December 21, 1999, Regional Planning Groups received application packets to use to request supplemental planning funds to complete development of the Regional Library

Networks and to request project funding for services and programs that would encourage development of network membership and services. Applications were due back to the State Library by January 21, 2000. Five (5) requests were received for increased planning funds, and twenty-five (25) project applications were submitted.

Staff established the following criteria to be used to evaluate and critique grant applications for planning and project funding.

Criteria:

1. Grants should be considered in relation to the progress a Planning Region has made towards Regional Library Network Development relative to other planning regions.
2. Requests for planning funds should not exceed 50% of the original planning grant made to Planning Regions in 1999.
3. The outcome of efforts funded through project grants is development and support of direct public services.
4. Project requests are supported by needs assessment that validates the request.
5. Since the reason for providing supplemental planning and project funding is to enhance the ability of Planning Areas to become Regional Library Networks, grant applications should clearly demonstrate how funding will lead to network status.
6. It is the intent of the Board to award as much funding as is legally possible given the specified areas of funding currently allowable and given the timeframe of grant requests.
7. Funding of individual grants or programs does not constitute the establishment of Board policy or direction. Since the law allows for regional pilot programs, funding of a pilot does not constitute agreement that the pilot becomes the de facto statewide program.

Staff Recommendation:

The Board should authorize the expenditure of Library of California funds to cover the amount of planning and project grants submitted. The Board should direct its Chief Executive Officer to negotiate with the Regional Planning Groups to ensure that all projects meet legal requirements, are funded at the appropriate level, and have timelines that correspond to those for Regional Library Network Development. As funding model programs and pilots enhances regional development of services, it is also recommended

that funding these projects should not constitute Board direction or policy for program development or future funding directions.

RELATED ISSUES TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE:

Consideration of applications from Regional Planning Groups to create Regional Library Networks.

Relevant Committee:	Support Services
Staff Liaison:	Diana Paque